# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/3/21

# The Compelling Purpose of God



He…said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem…" —[Luke 18:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+18%3A31)

Jerusalem, in the life of our Lord, represents the place where He reached the culmination of His Father’s will. Jesus said, “I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me” ([John 5:30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+5:30)). Seeking to do “the will of the Father” was the one dominating concern throughout our Lord’s life. And whatever He encountered along the way, whether joy or sorrow, success or failure, He was never deterred from that purpose. “…He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem…” ([Luke 9:51](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9:51)).

The greatest thing for us to remember is that we go up to Jerusalem to fulfill God’s purpose, not our own. In the natural life our ambitions are our own, but in the Christian life we have no goals of our own. We talk so much today about our decisions for Christ, our determination to be Christians, and our decisions for this and that, but in the New Testament the only aspect that is brought out is the compelling purpose of God. “You did not choose Me, but I chose you…” ([John 15:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15:16)).

We are not taken into a conscious agreement with God’s purpose— we are taken into God’s purpose with no awareness of it at all. We have no idea what God’s goal may be; as we continue, His purpose becomes even more and more vague. God’s aim appears to have missed the mark, because we are too nearsighted to see the target at which He is aiming. At the beginning of the Christian life, we have our own ideas as to what God’s purpose is. We say, “God means for me to go over there,” and, “God has called me to do this special work.” We do what we think is right, and yet the compelling purpose of God remains upon us. The work we do is of no account when compared with the compelling purpose of God. It is simply the scaffolding surrounding His work and His plan. “He took the twelve aside…” ([Luke 18:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+18:31)). God takes us aside all the time. We have not yet understood all there is to know of the compelling purpose of God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The great word of Jesus to His disciples is Abandon. When God has brought us into the relationship of disciples, we have to venture on His word; trust entirely to Him and watch that when He brings us to the venture, we take it.  Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, 1459 R

# CCEL – 8/3/21

**His mercy is on them that fear Him.**—[LUKE 1:50.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.1.html" \l "Luke.1.50)

Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.—The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, . . . and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord.—To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.—The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

[Psa. 31:19,20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.31.html#Ps.31.19).[I Pet. 1:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.17). -[Psa. 145:18,19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.145.html" \l "Ps.145.18).[II Kgs. 22:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiKgs.22.html" \l "iiKgs.22.19). -[Isa. 66:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.66.html" \l "Isa.66.2). -[Psa. 34:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html" \l "Ps.34.18).

“The Lamb is the light thereof.” **[Revelation 21:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.21.html" \l "Rev.21.23)**

Quietly contemplate the Lamb as the light of heaven. Light in Scripture is the emblem of joy. The joy of the saints in heaven is comprised in this: Jesus chose us, loved us, bought us, cleansed us, robed us, kept us, glorified us: we are here entirely through the Lord Jesus. Each one of these thoughts shall be to them like a cluster of the grapes of Eshcol. Light is also the cause of beauty. Nought of beauty is left when light is gone. Without light no radiance flashes from the sapphire, no peaceful ray proceedeth from the pearl; and thus all the beauty of the saints above comes from Jesus. As planets, they reflect the light of the Sun of Righteousness; they live as beams proceeding from the central orb. If he withdrew, they must die; if his glory were veiled, their glory must expire. Light is also the emblem of knowledge. In heaven our knowledge will be perfect, but the Lord Jesus himself will be the fountain of it. Dark providences, never understood before, will then be clearly seen, and all that puzzles us now will become plain to us in the light of the Lamb. Oh! what unfoldings there will be and what glorifying of the God of love! Light also means manifestation. Light manifests. In this world it doth not yet appear what we shall be. God’s people are a hidden people, but when Christ receives his people into heaven, he will touch them with the wand of his own love, and change them into the image of his manifested glory. They were poor and wretched, but what a transformation! They were stained with sin, but one touch of his finger, and they are bright as the sun, and clear as crystal. Oh! what a manifestation! All this proceeds from the exalted Lamb. Whatever there may be of effulgent splendour, Jesus shall be the centre and soul of it all. Oh! to be present and to see him in his own light, the King of kings, and Lord of lords!

# Word Live – 8/3/21

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 8/3/21

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 8/3/21

# A Total Transformation

**Read:** [**Hosea 1:10**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+1%3a10%2c+2%3a1)

10“Yet the Israelites will be like the sand on the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ they will be called ‘children of the living God.’

**Read:** [**Hosea 2:1**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+1%3a10%2c+2%3a1)

2 [[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+1%3A10%2C+2%3A1+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22107a)]“Say of your brothers, ‘My people,’ and of your sisters, ‘My loved one.’

#### Footnotes:

1. [Hosea 2:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+1%3A10%2C+2%3A1+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22107) In Hebrew texts 2:1-23 is numbered 2:3-25.

Have you ever heard a salvation story so shocking it dropped your jaw? For the past several years, Christianity Today has compiled the Top Ten Testimonies of the year. Titles include: “How a French Atheist Became a Theologian” and, “I Thought God Could Never Love a Convicted Murderer. I Was Wrong.” The power of God’s love to bring total transformation cannot be denied.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. Isaiah 55:8

Today’s passage encapsulates God’s redemptive work on Israel’s behalf in much the same way. Having declared that Israel had relinquished their position as God’s chosen nation, Hosea suddenly—with little transition—reaffirmed in verse 10 God’s covenant promise to Abraham (Gen. 22:17). Despite their failure to obey, Israel would still grow and prosper and become like the “sand on the seashore”—too numerous to count (v. 10). Israel would once again be called “children of the living God.” And they would once again be reunited with Judah under one leader as a prosperous people.

It is a stunning reversal that finishes with the following phrase: “Great will be the day of Jezreel” (v. 11). The meaning attached to the place and person would be turned on its head—once again—in a way that only the “living God” could accomplish, a living God who stands in stark contrast to the lifeless idols that had gained Israel’s affection.

Hosea 2:1 foreshadows the reversal of the remaining children’s names, but also pulls the reader into the rest of the book. Just like a shocking headline grabs our attention and makes us want to read the article, these verses in Hosea leave us wondering: How? How could such total rejection turn around to total acceptance, forgiveness, and love? The rest of the book will show us.

**Apply the Word**

In what ways has God transformed your life? Your testimony can be any one of your “this is how God worked” stories. It has the power to teach and inspire others. Share that story with someone today.

### Pray with Us

Your justice and grace are beyond our understanding; You punish wrongdoing yet always provide for mercy. May we fear You and love You, knowing our place before Your holy majesty.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 8/3/21

# Walking with Jesus

 **Read:** [**Hebrews 12:1–3**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2012.1%E2%80%933)

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. [Hebrews 12:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2012.1)

Lean food rations, waterproof boots, and a map are some of the essentials carried by hikers on the John Muir Trail. The John Muir Trail is a 211-mile path in the western United States that winds across creeks, around lakes and woods, and up and over mountains, encompassing 47,000 feet of elevation gain. Because traversing this trail takes about three weeks, carrying the right amount of supplies is critical. Too much and you will run out of strength to carry it all; too little and you won’t have what you need for the journey.

Finishing well on our journey as believers in Jesus also requires careful consideration of what we bring. In [Hebrews 12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2012), we’re told to “throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.” The author compares our lives to a “race marked out for us,” one in which we must “not grow weary and lose heart” (vv. 1, 3). To become overburdened with sin or distracted by things outside of God’s purpose for us is to carry an unnecessary weight.

Just as there are packing lists for the John Muir Trail, God has provided directions for following Jesus in the Bible. We can know what habits, dreams, and desires are worth bringing along by examining them in light of the Scriptures. When we travel light, we’re able to finish well.

By:  [Karen Pimpo](https://odb.org/author/karenpimpo/)

#### Reflect & Pray

What’s hindering you in following Jesus? What would it look like to “throw it off”?

Jesus, help me travel lightly according to Your wisdom and to finish well.

Visit [ChristianUniversity.org/SF104](https://ChristianUniversity.org/SF104) to learn more about strengthening your walk with God.

#### Insight

The connective word therefore in [Hebrews 12:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2012.1) reflects back on the author’s conviction that what God had revealed about Himself in the past has come to fullness of meaning in His Son (1:1–3). No angel, holy day, temple, or sacrifice can be compared to Jesus. He alone revealed the glory and goodness of His Father by exposing the sin and shame of the world fully and by forgiving it completely (1:4–10:22). “Therefore” the author would go on to urge readers to keep the faith that had already enabled them and many before them to endure hardship as a way of showing their faith in God (10:32–11:40). This was the moment to keep their eyes on Jesus who was leading them in selfless concern for others (12:2; 13:1–4). This was their moment to trust the One who assured them that He’d never leave them or forsake them (vv. 5–6).

By: [**Mart DeHaan**](https://odb.org/author/martdehaan-2/)

# God Calling – 8/3/21

# Give Every Moment

My children, how dear to my Heart is the cry of Love that asks for all of Me, that wishes every action, thought, word and moment to be Mine. How poor the understanding of the one who thinks that money to be used in this good work or that, is the great gift to offer. Above all, I desire Love, true, warm, childlike Love, the trusting understanding Love, and then the gift I prize next is the gift of the moments, of all the moments.

I think even when Love's impetuous longing to serve Me has offered Me all Life, every day, every hour, I think even then it is a long, and not an easy lesson, to learn, what it means to give Me the moments.

The little things you planned to do, given up gladly at My suggestion, the little services joyfully rendered. See Me in all and then it will be an easy task

This is the priceless time of initiation, but remember that the path of initiation is not for all; but only for those who have felt the sorrow-cry of the world that needs a Savior and the tender plea of a Savior Who needs followers through whom He can accomplish His great work of Salvation joyfully.

Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel; return every man to his house, for this thing is from me. 1 Kings 12:24

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/4/21

# The Brave Friendship of God



He took the twelve aside… —[Luke 18:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+18%3A31)

Oh, the bravery of God in trusting us! Do you say, “But He has been unwise to choose me, because there is nothing good in me and I have no value”? That is exactly why He chose you. As long as you think that you are of value to Him He cannot choose you, because you have purposes of your own to serve. But if you will allow Him to take you to the end of your own self-sufficiency, then He can choose you to go with Him “to Jerusalem” ([Luke 18:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+18:31)). And that will mean the fulfillment of purposes which He does not discuss with you.

We tend to say that because a person has natural ability, he will make a good Christian. It is not a matter of our equipment, but a matter of our poverty; not of what we bring with us, but of what God puts into us; not a matter of natural virtues, of strength of character, of knowledge, or of experience— all of that is of no avail in this concern. The only thing of value is being taken into the compelling purpose of God and being made His friends (see [1 Corinthians 1:26-31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+1:26-31)). God’s friendship is with people who know their poverty. He can accomplish nothing with the person who thinks that he is of use to God. As Christians we are not here for our own purpose at all— we are here for the purpose of God, and the two are not the same. We do not know what God’s compelling purpose is, but whatever happens, we must maintain our relationship with Him. We must never allow anything to damage our relationship with God, but if something does damage it, we must take the time to make it right again. The most important aspect of Christianity is not the work we do, but the relationship we maintain and the surrounding influence and qualities produced by that relationship. That is all God asks us to give our attention to, and it is the one thing that is continually under attack.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Am I becoming more and more in love with God as a holy God, or with the conception of an amiable Being who says, “Oh well, sin doesn’t matter much”?  Disciples Indeed, 389 L

# CCEL – 8/4/21

**It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.**—[JOHN 19:30.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.19.html" \l "John.19.30)

Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.—I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.—We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering an offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.—Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.

I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.—Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

[Heb. 12:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.2). -[John 17:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.4). -[Heb. 10:10-14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.10). -[Col. 2:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.2.html" \l "Col.2.14).[John 10:17,18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.17). -[John. 15:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html" \l "John.15.13).

“The people that do know their God shall be strong.” [Daniel 11:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Dan.11.html" \l "Dan.11.32)

Every believer understands that to know God is the highest and best form of knowledge; and this spiritual knowledge is a source of strength to the Christian. It strengthens his faith. Believers are constantly spoken of in the Scriptures as being persons who are enlightened and taught of the Lord; they are said to “have an unction from the Holy One,” and it is the Spirit’s peculiar office to lead them into all truth, and all this for the increase and the fostering of their faith. Knowledge strengthens love, as well as faith. Knowledge opens the door, and then through that door we see our Saviour. Or, to use another similitude, knowledge paints the portrait of Jesus, and when we see that portrait then we love him, we cannot love a Christ whom we do not know, at least, in some degree. If we know but little of the excellences of Jesus, what he has done for us, and what he is doing now, we cannot love him much; but the more we know him, the more we shall love him. Knowledge also strengthens hope. How can we hope for a thing if we do not know of its existence? Hope may be the telescope, but till we receive instruction, our ignorance stands in the front of the glass, and we can see nothing whatever; knowledge removes the interposing object, and when we look through the bright optic glass we discern the glory to be revealed, and anticipate it with joyous confidence. Knowledge supplies us reasons for patience. How shall we have patience unless we know something of the sympathy of Christ, and understand the good which is to come out of the correction which our heavenly Father sends us? Nor is there one single grace of the Christian which, under God, will not be fostered and brought to perfection by holy knowledge. How important, then, is it that we should grow not only in grace, but in the “knowledge” of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

# Word Live – 8/4/21

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 8/4/21

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 8/4/21

# A Harsh Rebuke

**Read:** [**Hosea 2:2–5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3a2%e2%80%935)

### Israel Punished and Restored

2“Rebuke your mother, rebuke her,  
    for she is not my wife,  
    and I am not her husband.  
Let her remove the adulterous look from her face  
    and the unfaithfulness from between her breasts.  
3Otherwise I will strip her naked  
    and make her as bare as on the day she was born;  
I will make her like a desert,  
    turn her into a parched land,  
    and slay her with thirst.  
4I will not show my love to her children,  
    because they are the children of adultery.  
5Their mother has been unfaithful  
    and has conceived them in disgrace.  
She said, ‘I will go after my lovers,  
    who give me my food and my water,  
    my wool and my linen, my olive oil and my drink.’

Christianity has never existed in a cultural vacuum. For centuries, believers around the world have lived out their faith within that era’s language, customs, artistic expressions, and politics. In the book of Acts, for example, the Apostle Paul put his sermons into context for both the Jews and the Greeks. But there is a fine line between understanding our culture and allowing it to water down God’s truth. We are in dangerous territory when we blend society’s beliefs with scriptural truth and the heart of the gospel is gutted.

The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Numbers 14:18

The Israelites of Hosea’s day had long since crossed that syncretistic line. Since the time of the judges, they had been seduced by the Canaanite gods (Judg. 2:11–14). But after Jeroboam built his golden calves (1 Kings 12:25–33), their adoption of idolatry deepened. And by the time of Ahab (1 Kings 16), Baalism was the dominant religion in Israel, as central to the people as their worship as Yahweh.

Hence, the harsh rebuke of Hosea 2:2–5. God’s people had been adulterous. The “she is not my wife” in verse 2 is not a formal statement of divorce, since in the next sentence God calls on Israel to turn from her unfaithful ways. He also warns that if she does not, the repercussions would be disastrous. She would suffer the shame of nakedness (v. 3a). God would reverse the fertility of the land, demonstrating that He (and not Baal) actually holds this power (v. 3b). And God would remove His favor from her children. The consequences of her sin would be visited upon her children as the nation was sent into exile (v. 4). Today’s passage is a stark warning of the devastating effects of sin.

**Apply the Word**

Pray for today’s churches, and for our own hearts, that we will resist the lure of syncretism. Consider how you have seen churches water down the truth of God’s Word. How can we avoid that sin?

### Pray with Us

Today we pray for deep, abiding reverence for Your Word. Teach us to treasure truth. Help us discern where biblical values and cultural values get confused. Banish syncretism from our churches and our hearts.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 8/4/21

# Not Forgotten

 **Read:** [**Isaiah 49:14–18**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2049.14%E2%80%9318)

14But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me,  
    the Lord has forgotten me.”

15“Can a mother forget the baby at her breast  
    and have no compassion on the child she has borne?  
Though she may forget,  
    I will not forget you!  
16See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;  
    your walls are ever before me.  
17Your children hasten back,  
    and those who laid you waste depart from you.  
18Lift up your eyes and look around;  
    all your children gather and come to you.  
As surely as I live,” declares the Lord,  
    “you will wear them all as ornaments;  
    you will put them on, like a bride.

I will not forget you! [Isaiah 49:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2049.15)

“Uncle Arthur, do you remember the day you took me to the barbershop and the supermarket? I was wearing tan khakis, a blue-plaid oxford shirt, a navy-blue cardigan, brown socks, and brown Rockport shoes. The date was Thursday, October 20, 2016.” My nephew Jared’s autism-related challenges are offset by his phenomenal memory that can recall details like days and dates and the clothes he was wearing years after an event took place.

Because of the way he’s wired, Jared possesses the kind of memory that reminds me of the all-knowing, loving God—the Keeper of time and eternity. He knows the facts and won’t forget His promises or His people. Have you had moments when you’ve questioned whether or not you’ve been forgotten by God? When others appear to be healthier or happier or more successful or otherwise better off?

Ancient Israel’s less-than-ideal situation caused her to say, “The Lord has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me” ([Isaiah 49:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2049.14)). But that wasn’t the case. God’s compassion and care exceeded the natural bonds of affection that mothers have for their children (v. 15). Before embracing labels like “forsaken” or “forgotten,” think again of what God has done in and through His Son, Jesus. In the gospel that brings forgiveness, God has clearly said, “I will not forget you!” (v. 15).

By:  [Arthur Jackson](https://odb.org/author/arthurjackson/)

#### Reflect & Pray

When have you felt alone, forsaken, and forgotten by God? How does processing the love of God expressed by sending Jesus to die for your sins help to counter feelings of being forgotten by Him?

Father, when I’m tempted to feel neglected, forgotten, and abandoned, help me to ponder again the love You demonstrated by sending Jesus to die for me.

#### Insight

In ancient Mesopotamia, tattooing often showed identity. To have a tattoo might indicate whom you belonged to as a slave, or it could be the markings of your god. In today’s passage ([Isaiah 49:14–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2049.14%E2%80%9318)), the prophet Isaiah flips that concept. God engraves the names of His people onto His palms (v. 16). The imagery is one of permanence and deep intimacy. We can’t be separated from God. The metaphor of God’s “hand” or “hands” is used often in Scripture as a reference to His authority and strength and the security found in Him. Jesus highlighted this security with His comforting words in [John 10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2010), when He said of His sheep (those who put their faith in Him), “No one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one” (vv. 28–30).

By: [**Tim Gustafson**](https://odb.org/author/timgustafson/)

# God Calling – 8/4/21

# Eternal Life

Oh Jesus, we love Thee so and long to serve Thee.

My children, you are both to do mighty things for Me. Glories and wonders unfold. Life is one glorious whole.

Draw into your beings more and more this wonderful Eternal Life. It is the flow of the Life Eternal through spirit, mind, and body, that cleanses, heals, restores, renews youth, and passes on from you to others, with the same miracle-working power.

"And this is Life Eternal that they may know thee. . . and Jesus Christ, whom Thou has sent." So seek by constant contact to know Me more and more.

Make Me the one abiding Presence of your day of which you are conscious all the time. Seek to do less and to accomplish more, to achieve more. Doing is action. Achievement is successful action.

Remember that Eternal Life is the only lasting life, so that all that is done without being done in the Power of My Spirit, My Life, is passing. All done in that Spirit-Life is undying.

"I give unto to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."  So Eternal Life means security too, safety. Dwell increasingly in the consciousness of that security, that safety.

He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.  1 John 5:12

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/5/21

# The Bewildering Call of God



"…and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished."…But they understood none of these things… —[Luke 18:31, 34](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+18%3A31%2C+34)

God called Jesus Christ to what seemed absolute disaster. And Jesus Christ called His disciples to see Him put to death, leading every one of them to the place where their hearts were broken. His life was an absolute failure from every standpoint except God’s. But what seemed to be failure from man’s standpoint was a triumph from God’s standpoint, because God’s purpose is never the same as man’s purpose.

This bewildering call of God comes into our lives as well. The call of God can never be understood absolutely or explained externally; it is a call that can only be perceived and understood internally by our true inner-nature. The call of God is like the call of the sea— no one hears it except the person who has the nature of the sea in him. What God calls us to cannot be definitely stated, because His call is simply to be His friend to accomplish His own purposes. Our real test is in truly believing that God knows what He desires. The things that happen do not happen by chance— they happen entirely by the decree of God. God is sovereignly working out His own purposes.

If we are in fellowship and oneness with God and recognize that He is taking us into His purposes, then we will no longer strive to find out what His purposes are. As we grow in the Christian life, it becomes simpler to us, because we are less inclined to say, “I wonder why God allowed this or that?” And we begin to see that the compelling purpose of God lies behind everything in life, and that God is divinely shaping us into oneness with that purpose. A Christian is someone who trusts in the knowledge and the wisdom of God, not in his own abilities. If we have a purpose of our own, it destroys the simplicity and the calm, relaxed pace which should be characteristic of the children of God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Crises reveal character. When we are put to the test the hidden resources of our character are revealed exactly.  Disciples Indeed, 393 R

# CCEL – 8/5/21

**Walk in newness of life.**—[ROM. 6:4.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.6.html" \l "Rom.6.4)

As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.—I beseech you, . . . brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.—In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy.—This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.—Ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus. Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

[Rom. 6:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.6.html" \l "Rom.6.19). -[Rom. 12:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.12.html" \l "Rom.12.1).[II Cor. 5:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.17). -[Gal. 6:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.6.html" \l "Gal.6.15). -[Eph. 4:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.17). -[Eph. 4:20,21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.20),[24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.24).

“We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.” [Romans 8:28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.28)

Upon some points a believer is absolutely sure. He knows, for instance, that God sits in the stern-sheets of the vessel when it rocks most. He believes that an invisible hand is always on the world’s tiller, and that wherever providence may drift, Jehovah steers it. That re-assuring knowledge prepares him for everything. He looks over the raging waters and sees the spirit of Jesus treading the billows, and he hears a voice saying, “It is I, be not afraid.” He knows too that God is always wise, and, knowing this, he is confident that there can be no accidents, no mistakes; that nothing can occur which ought not to arise. He can say, “If I should lose all I have, it is better that I should lose than have, if God so wills: the worst calamity is the wisest and the kindest thing that could befall to me if God ordains it.” “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.” The Christian does not merely hold this as a theory, but he knows it as a matter of fact. Everything has worked for good as yet; the poisonous drugs mixed in fit proportions have worked the cure; the sharp cuts of the lancet have cleansed out the proud flesh and facilitated the healing. Every event as yet has worked out the most divinely blessed results; and so, believing that God rules all, that he governs wisely, that he brings good out of evil, the believer’s heart is assured, and he is enabled calmly to meet each trial as it comes. The believer can in the spirit of true resignation pray, “Send me what thou wilt, my God, so long as it comes from thee; never came there an ill portion from thy table to any of thy children.”

“Say not my soul, ‘From whence can God relieve my care?’

Remember that Omnipotence has servants everywhere.

His method is sublime, his heart profoundly kind,

God never is before his time, and never is behind.”

# Word Live – 8/5/21

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 8/5/21

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 8/5/21

# First Love

**Read:** [**Hosea 2:6–15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3a6%e2%80%9315)

6Therefore I will block her path with thornbushes;  
    I will wall her in so that she cannot find her way.  
7She will chase after her lovers but not catch them;  
    she will look for them but not find them.  
Then she will say,  
    ‘I will go back to my husband as at first,  
    for then I was better off than now.’  
8She has not acknowledged that I was the one  
    who gave her the grain, the new wine and oil,  
who lavished on her the silver and gold—  
    which they used for Baal.

9“Therefore I will take away my grain when it ripens,  
    and my new wine when it is ready.  
I will take back my wool and my linen,  
    intended to cover her naked body.  
10So now I will expose her lewdness  
    before the eyes of her lovers;  
    no one will take her out of my hands.  
11I will stop all her celebrations:  
    her yearly festivals, her New Moons,  
    her Sabbath days—all her appointed festivals.  
12I will ruin her vines and her fig trees,  
    which she said were her pay from her lovers;  
I will make them a thicket,  
    and wild animals will devour them.  
13I will punish her for the days  
    she burned incense to the Baals;  
she decked herself with rings and jewelry,  
    and went after her lovers,  
    but me she forgot,”  
declares the Lord.

14“Therefore I am now going to allure her;  
    I will lead her into the wilderness  
    and speak tenderly to her.  
15There I will give her back her vineyards,  
    and will make the Valley of Achor[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A6%E2%80%9315+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22121a)] a door of hope.  
There she will respond[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A6%E2%80%9315+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22121b)] as in the days of her youth,  
    as in the day she came up out of Egypt.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Hosea 2:15](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A6%E2%80%9315+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22121) Achor means trouble.
2. [Hosea 2:15](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A6%E2%80%9315+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22121) Or sing

In the movie Fireproof, firefighter Caleb Holt fights to save his failing marriage by following advice found in The Love Dare. The book challenges spouses to make one concrete overture of love each day for 40 days. Ultimately, Fireproof is a story of hope, and by the end of the film, Holt’s wife has softened toward him, and they are on their way toward healing.

This is what the LORD says: “I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me.” Jeremiah 2:2

In today’s passage, we see God’s plan to win back His wayward people. God uses a more aggressive approach. Three “therefore” clauses describe His specific strategy. First, God would “block her path with thornbushes” (v. 6). He would hedge in His wife, or His people, to prevent her from straying further. This comparison may trouble us, but God uses this as an act of grace, rather than anger. It is for her good, to direct her back to Himself. And verses 7–8 seem to indicate that restoration is possible when they describe the errant wife’s potential change of heart.

Second, God would “take away [His] grain when it ripens” (v. 9) and “ruin her vines and her fig trees” (v. 12). This is a demonstration of His true sovereignty over the land and its fertility, and it would reveal the impotence of Baal. Third, God would “allure” Israel by taking her away to the desert and speaking tender words of love. He would restore her vineyards, and the Valley of Achor would become “a door of hope” (v. 15).

Here, the redemptive character of God is on full display. He still uses these same techniques to bring us back to Himself. He erects roadblocks so we will turn around. He withholds His favor to evoke in us a longing for Himself. And He reveals Himself in acts of love.

**Apply the Word**

Do you have a wayward heart? It is easy to turn our desires toward things that are not pleasing to God. Pray for the wayward heart of your community and country, that we would turn back to Him.

### Pray with Us

Righteous Father, sin thrives when unacknowledged. Give us the wisdom not only to recognize the Holy Spirit’s conviction, but to confess our sins and intentionally seek accountability with other believers.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 8/5/21

# Greatness

 **Read:** [**Mark 9:33–37**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%209.33%E2%80%9337)

33They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the road?” 34But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

35Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

36He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, 37“Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”

Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all. [Mark 9:35](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%209.35)

Cuthbert is a much-loved figure in northern England. Responsible for evangelizing much of the area in the seventh century, Cuthbert counseled monarchs and influenced state affairs; and after his death, the city of Durham was built in his honor. But Cuthbert’s legacy is great in more ways than these.

After a plague ravaged the region, Cuthbert once toured affected towns offering solace. Readying to leave one village, he checked if there was anyone left to pray for. There was—a woman, clutching a child. She had already lost one son, and the child she held was nearing death too. Cuthbert took the fevered boy in his arms, prayed for him, and kissed his forehead. “Do not fear,” he told her, “for no one else of your household will die.” The boy reportedly lived.

Jesus once took a small boy into his arms to give a lesson on greatness, saying, “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me” ([Mark 9:37](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%209.37)). To “welcome” someone in Jewish culture meant to serve them, the way a host welcomes a guest. Since children were to serve adults and not be served, the idea must’ve been shocking. Jesus’ point? True greatness resides in serving the smallest and lowliest (v. 35).

A counselor to monarchs. An influencer of history. A city built in his honor. But perhaps heaven records Cuthbert’s legacy more like this: A mother noticed. A forehead kissed. A humble life reflecting his Master.

By:  [Sheridan Voysey](https://odb.org/author/svoysey/)

#### Reflect & Pray

When you think of a “great” person in history, what image comes to mind? How can you pursue Jesus’ kind of greatness today?

Dear God, help me to humbly serve others.

#### Insight

Context is always a key element when considering any passage of Scripture, and today’s text resides in a sadly tragic context. In [Mark 9:30–32](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%209.30%E2%80%9332), Jesus made His second of three announcements ([Mark 8:31](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%208.31); [9:31](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%209.31); [10:33](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%2010.33)) that His ultimate mission was to go to the cross and suffer the horrors and humiliations of crucifixion. In [Mark 8:32](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%208.32), Peter responded to Jesus’ first announcement of the cross with indignation—convinced that Jesus should never have to suffer such anguish. In [Mark 9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%209), the disciples as a group follow Christ’s announcement with an argument about which of them would be the greatest—apparently an ongoing subject of their conversations. Clearly, they’d failed to understand the sobering reality of Jesus’ coming sacrifice on their behalf and could only contemplate the benefits they might receive in the coming kingdom. Their discussion is a reminder of how short-sighted we can be and how unaware of God’s bigger purposes.

By: [**Bill Crowder**](https://odb.org/author/billcrowder/)

# God Calling – 8/5/21

# Hour Of Need

Lord, come to us and heal us.

I am your Healer, your Joy, your Lord. You bid Me, your Lord, come. Did you not know that I am here? With noiseless footfall I draw near to you.

Your hour of need is the moment of My Coming.

Could you know My Love, could you measure My Longing to help, you would know that I need no agonized pleading.

Your need is My Call.

Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.  Jeremiah 17:14

Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.  Ephesians 5:18

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/6/21

# The Cross in Prayer



In that day you will ask in My name… —[John 16:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+16%3A26)

We too often think of the Cross of Christ as something we have to get through, yet we get through for the purpose of getting into it. The Cross represents only one thing for us— complete, entire, absolute identification with the Lord Jesus Christ— and there is nothing in which this identification is more real to us than in prayer.

“Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him” ([Matthew 6:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6:8)). Then why should we ask? The point of prayer is not to get answers from God, but to have perfect and complete oneness with Him. If we pray only because we want answers, we will become irritated and angry with God. We receive an answer every time we pray, but it does not always come in the way we expect, and our spiritual irritation shows our refusal to identify ourselves truly with our Lord in prayer. We are not here to prove that God answers prayer, but to be living trophies of God’s grace.

“…I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loves you…” ([John 16:26-27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+16:26-27)). Have you reached such a level of intimacy with God that the only thing that can account for your prayer life is that it has become one with the prayer life of Jesus Christ? Has our Lord exchanged your life with His vital life? If so, then “in that day” you will be so closely identified with Jesus that there will be no distinction.

When prayer seems to be unanswered, beware of trying to place the blame on someone else. That is always a trap of Satan. When you seem to have no answer, there is always a reason— God uses these times to give you deep personal instruction, and it is not for anyone else but you.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

It is perilously possible to make our conceptions of God like molten lead poured into a specially designed mould, and when it is cold and hard we fling it at the heads of the religious people who don’t agree with us.  
Disciples Indeed

# CCEL – 8/6/21

**Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth.**—[PROV. 3:12.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.3.html" \l "Prov.3.12)

See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.—I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.—My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.—As a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.—Now no chastening for the present, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.—Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

[Deut. 32:39](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.32.html" \l "Deut.32.39). -[Jer. 29:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.29.html" \l "Jer.29.11). -[Isa. 55:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.55.html" \l "Isa.55.8).[Hos. 2:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Hos.2.html" \l "Hos.2.14). -[Deut. 8:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.8.html" \l "Deut.8.5). -[Heb. 12:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.11). -[I Pet. 5:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.5.html" \l "iPet.5.6).[Psa. 119:75](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.75).

“Watchman, what of the night?” [Isaiah 21:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.21.html" \l "Isa.21.11)

What enemies are abroad? Errors are a numerous horde, and new ones appear every hour: against what heresy am I to be on my guard? Sins creep from their lurking places when the darkness reigns; I must myself mount the watch-tower, and watch unto prayer. Our heavenly Protector foresees all the attacks which are about to be made upon us, and when as yet the evil designed us is but in the desire of Satan, he prays for us that our faith fail not, when we are sifted as wheat. Continue O gracious Watchman, to forewarn us of our foes, and for Zion’s sake hold not thy peace.

“Watchman, what of the night?” What weather is coming for the Church? Are the clouds lowering, or is it all clear and fair overhead? We must care for the Church of God with anxious love; and now that Popery and infidelity are both threatening, let us observe the signs of the times and prepare for conflict.

“Watchman, what of the night?” What stars are visible? What precious promises suit our present case? You sound the alarm, give us the consolation also. Christ, the polestar, is ever fixed in his place, and all the stars are secure in the right hand of their Lord.

But watchman, when comes the morning? The Bridegroom tarries. Are there no signs of his coming forth as the Sun of Righteousness? Has not the morning star arisen as the pledge of day? When will the day dawn, and the shadows flee away? O Jesus, if thou come not in person to thy waiting Church this day, yet come in Spirit to my sighing heart, and make it sing for joy.

“Now all the earth is bright and glad

With the fresh morn;

But all my heart is cold, and dark and sad:

Sun of the soul, let me behold thy dawn!

Come, Jesus, Lord,

O quickly come, according to thy word.”

# Word Live – 8/6/21

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 8/6/21

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 8/6/21

# Future Hope

**Read:** [**Hosea 2:16–23**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3a16%e2%80%9323)

16“In that day,” declares the Lord,  
    “you will call me ‘my husband’;  
    you will no longer call me ‘my master.[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22122a)]’  
17I will remove the names of the Baals from her lips;  
    no longer will their names be invoked.  
18In that day I will make a covenant for them  
    with the beasts of the field, the birds in the sky  
    and the creatures that move along the ground.  
Bow and sword and battle  
    I will abolish from the land,  
    so that all may lie down in safety.  
19I will betroth you to me forever;  
    I will betroth you in[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22125b)] righteousness and justice,  
    in[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22125c)] love and compassion.  
20I will betroth you in[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22126d)] faithfulness,  
    and you will acknowledge the Lord.

21“In that day I will respond,”  
    declares the Lord—  
“I will respond to the skies,  
    and they will respond to the earth;  
22and the earth will respond to the grain,  
    the new wine and the olive oil,  
    and they will respond to Jezreel.[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22128e)]  
23I will plant her for myself in the land;  
    I will show my love to the one I called ‘Not my loved one.[[f](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22129f)]’  
I will say to those called ‘Not my people,[[g](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22129g)]’ ‘You are my people’;  
    and they will say, ‘You are my God.’”

#### Footnotes:

1. [Hosea 2:16](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22122) Hebrew baal
2. [Hosea 2:19](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22125) Or with
3. [Hosea 2:19](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22125) Or with
4. [Hosea 2:20](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22126) Or with
5. [Hosea 2:22](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22128) Jezreel means God plants.
6. [Hosea 2:23](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22129) Hebrew Lo-Ruhamah (see 1:6)
7. [Hosea 2:23](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+2%3A16%E2%80%9323+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22129) Hebrew Lo-Ammi (see 1:9)

I recently read a story by a woman who calls herself “The Restored Wife.” She and her husband endured years of bitter arguments, bankruptcy, an affair, and even divorce. She was planning to take her own life when God broke through and led her to the book of Hosea. God used Hosea’s story to show her what forgiveness can look like. Eventually, she and her husband remarried. “My testimony isn’t pretty,” she writes. But she wants others to know they are “never too far away . . . to come back home.”

I will say to those called ”Not my people,” “You are my people,” and they will say, “You are my God.” Hosea 2:23

Today’s passage describes even more transformation in the intimacy between God and His people. Three incredible “in that day” promises are given, although the reader is not told when “that day” will be. The first “in that day” pledge reaffirms Israel’s relationship status before God (v. 16). It reads like a wedding vow: “You will call me ‘my husband’.” Israel will no longer confuse God with Baal.

With the second “in that day” promise (v. 18), God will reestablish a covenant relationship between His people and nature. He will also remove all signs of war, so that safety is guaranteed. It implies a return to Garden of Eden conditions. And God declares their eternal betrothal based on His character of righteousness, justice, love, compassion, and faithfulness (vv. 19–20).

The final “in that day” promise returns to the fertility theme (v. 21). God will restore a balanced relationship between the rain, the soil, and the seed. God will do what Baal could never do—empower the earth to produce. Lastly, the recommitment of both God and His people is described as a vow- renewal ceremony. In that day, God will lovingly say, “You are my people.” And the people will respond, “You are my God” (v. 23).

**Apply the Word**

Does your heart long for restoration with God? The future and eternal hope promised to God’s people here is ours as well. Fix your eyes on that today.

### Pray with Us

Lord, we are Your children, yet how easily we wander away. Let us find no satisfaction when we seek other things to satisfy our needs. Restore us to obedience so we can say, with conviction, “You are my God.”

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 8/6/21

# Rise Again

 **Read:** [**Proverbs 24:15–18**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2024.15%E2%80%9318)

#### Saying 27

15Do not lurk like a thief near the house of the righteous,  
    do not plunder their dwelling place;  
16for though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again,  
    but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes.

#### Saying 28

17Do not gloat when your enemy falls;  
    when they stumble, do not let your heart rejoice,  
18or the Lord will see and disapprove  
    and turn his wrath away from them.

Though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again. [Proverbs 24:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2024.16)

Olympic runner Ryan Hall is the US record-holder for the half marathon. He completed the event distance of 13.1 miles (21 kilometers) in a remarkable time of fifty-nine minutes and forty-three seconds, making him the first US athlete to run the race in under one hour. While Hall has celebrated record-setting victories, he’s also known the disappointment of not being able to finish a race.

Having tasted both success and failure, Hall credits his faith in Jesus for sustaining him. One of his favorite Bible verses is an encouraging reminder from the book of Proverbs that “though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again” (24:16). This proverb reminds us that the righteous, those who trust in and have a right relationship with God, will still experience difficulties and hardships. However, as they continue to seek Him even in the midst of difficulty, God is faithful to give them the strength to rise again.

Have you recently experienced a devastating disappointment or failure and feel like you’ll never recover? Scripture encourages us not to rely on our strength but to continue to put our confidence in God and His promises. As we trust Him, God’s Spirit gives us strength for every difficulty we encounter in this life, from the seemingly mundane to significant struggles ([2 Corinthians 12:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%2012.9)).

By:  [Lisa M. Samra](https://odb.org/author/lisasamra/)

#### Reflect & Pray

How has God strengthened you after a difficult disappointment? How does that give you encouragement for the struggles you face today?

Heavenly Father, thank You that in every trial and disappointment You’re always close, offering comfort and strength to help me rise again.

Visit [ChristianUniversity.org/SF108](https://ChristianUniversity.org/SF108) to discover how you can best serve others and understand yourself better.

#### Insight

[Proverbs 24:15–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2024.15%E2%80%9318) contains two “sayings”—Saying 27 (vv. 15–16) and Saying 28 (vv. 17–18)—from a collection of thirty sayings ascribed to “the wise” (22:17–24:22). The warning in Saying 27 against attacking the righteous illustrates a key theme in Proverbs: the self-destructive nature of sin and evil. Because God has woven wisdom and goodness into the fabric of reality, to live as the righteous do is to align with the way creation is designed to flourish. Choosing evil, on the other hand, is to work against the grain of God’s world in a way that is unavoidably self-destructive.

For that reason, Saying 27 teaches that seeking to destroy the righteous is a futile ambition. Even if the righteous suffer temporarily, good will ultimately always triumph over evil. “Though the righteous fall seven times [the number seven symbolizing many times], they rise again” (v. 16).

By: [**Monica La Rose**](https://odb.org/author/monicalarose/)

# God Calling – 8/6/21

# Dwell Apart

Rest more with Me. If I, the Son of God, needed those times of quiet communion with My Father, away, alone, from noise, from activity -- then surely you need them too.

Refilling with the Spirit is a need. That dwelling apart, that shutting yourself away in the very secret place of your being -- away alone with Me.

From these times you come forth in Power to bless and heal.

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.  Ephesians 5:18

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/7/21

# Prayer in the Father’s House



…they found Him in the temple….And He said to them, "…Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?" —[Luke 2:46, 49](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+2%3A46%2C+49)

Our Lord’s childhood was not immaturity waiting to grow into manhood— His childhood is an eternal fact. Am I a holy, innocent child of God as a result of my identification with my Lord and Savior? Do I look at my life as being in my Father’s house? Is the Son of God living in His Father’s house within me?

The only abiding reality is God Himself, and His order comes to me moment by moment. Am I continually in touch with the reality of God, or do I pray only when things have gone wrong— when there is some disturbance in my life? I must learn to identify myself closely with my Lord in ways of holy fellowship and oneness that some of us have not yet even begun to learn. “…I must be about My Father’s business”— and I must learn to live every moment of my life in my Father’s house.

Think about your own circumstances. Are you so closely identified with the Lord’s life that you are simply a child of God, continually talking to Him and realizing that everything comes from His hands? Is the eternal Child in you living in His Father’s house? Is the grace of His ministering life being worked out through you in your home, your business, and in your circle of friends? Have you been wondering why you are going through certain circumstances? In fact, it is not that you have to go through them. It is because of your relationship with the Son of God who comes, through the providential will of His Father, into your life. You must allow Him to have His way with you, staying in perfect oneness with Him.

The life of your Lord is to become your vital, simple life, and the way He worked and lived among people while here on earth must be the way He works and lives in you.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The life of Abraham is an illustration of two things: of unreserved surrender to God, and of God’s complete possession of a child of His for His own highest end. Not Knowing Whither, 901 R

# CCEL – 8/7/21

**The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name.**—[JOHN 14:26.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.26)

If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.—If ye . . . being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?—Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.—Ye have not, because ye ask not.

When . . . the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them.

[John 4:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.4.html" \l "John.4.10). -[Luke 11:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.11.html" \l "Luke.11.13). -[John 16:23,24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html" \l "John.16.23). -[Jas. 4:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.4.html" \l "Jas.4.2).[John 16:13,14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html" \l "John.16.13).[Isa. 63:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.63.html" \l "Isa.63.10).

“The upright love thee” [Song of Solomon 1:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.1.html" \l "Song.1.4)

Believers love Jesus with a deeper affection than they dare to give to any other being. They would sooner lose father and mother than part with Christ. They hold all earthly comforts with a loose hand, but they carry him fast locked in their bosoms. They voluntarily deny themselves for his sake, but they are not to be driven to deny him. It is scant love which the fire of persecution can dry up; the true believer’s love is a deeper stream than this. Men have laboured to divide the faithful from their Master, but their attempts have been fruitless in every age. Neither crowns of honour, nor frowns of anger, have untied this more than Gordian knot. This is no every-day attachment which the world’s power may at length dissolve. Neither man nor devil have found a key which opens this lock. Never has the craft of Satan been more at fault than when he has exercised it in seeking to rend in sunder this union of two divinely welded hearts. It is written, and nothing can blot out the sentence, “The upright love thee.” The intensity of the love of the upright, however, is not so much to be judged by what it appears as by what the upright long for. It is our daily lament that we cannot love enough. Would that our hearts were capable of holding more, and reaching further. Like Samuel Rutherford, we sigh and cry, “Oh, for as much love as would go round about the earth, and over heaven—yea, the heaven of heavens, and ten thousand worlds—that I might let all out upon fair, fair, only fair Christ.” Alas! our longest reach is but a span of love, and our affection is but as a drop of a bucket compared with his deserts. Measure our love by our intentions, and it is high indeed; 'tis thus, we trust, our Lord doth judge of it. Oh, that we could give all the love in all hearts in one great mass, a gathering together of all loves to him who is altogether lovely!

# Word Live – 8/7/21

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 8/7/21

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 8/7/21

# The Restoration Plan

**Read:** [**Hosea 3:1–5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+3%3a1%e2%80%935)

### Hosea’s Reconciliation With His Wife

3 The Lord said to me, “Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another man and is an adulteress. Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes.”

2So I bought her for fifteen shekels[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+3%3A1%E2%80%935+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22131a)] of silver and about a homer and a lethek[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+3%3A1%E2%80%935+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22131b)] of barley. 3Then I told her, “You are to live with me many days; you must not be a prostitute or be intimate with any man, and I will behave the same way toward you.”

4For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or household gods. 5Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the Lord and to his blessings in the last days.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Hosea 3:2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+3%3A1%E2%80%935+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22131) That is, about 6 ounces or about 170 grams
2. [Hosea 3:2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+3%3A1%E2%80%935+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22131) A homer and a lethek possibly weighed about 430 pounds or about 195 kilograms.

I believe that love is primarily a decision, a choice, an action we take. Hosea 3 reinforces this understanding. In this short and summarized chapter, we return to the story of Hosea and Gomer. From the first-person point of view, Hosea relays a key conversation he had with God, in which God instructed him to show “love” again to his adulterous wife. Importantly, this reconciliation was commissioned by God for His purposes. It was not initially Hosea’s idea.

But you, LORD, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness. Psalm 86:15

The Hebrew word for “love” in Hosea 3:1 can have several meanings: a strong desire, compassion for family, a romantic encounter, or emotional care and commitment. Here God calls Hosea to love Gomer as He has loved Israel. This “love” is clearly shown in Hosea’s actions and words. To begin with, Hosea bought Gomer back for fifteen shekels of silver and some barley. No explanation is given for this monetary exchange. Gomer may have incurred debt while they were separated or even sold herself into slavery. Regardless, Hosea willingly pays a steep price for her return. Then, Hosea spells out the conditions of their reunification. Gomer was to live with Hosea and remain celibate for many days—a probationary and purification period—after which the marriage relationship would be reinstated. Verses 4–5 describe a similar process for God’s people. They would live for “many days” (v. 4) without the political and religious practices that had led them astray. With their old temptations removed, the Israelites would return and seek the Lord.

In Hosea’s living metaphor of shocking and sacrificial love, his audience would have seen a mere reflection of the love that God had for them—a love that longs for restoration and willingly redeems, a love that passionately pursues the prostitute.

**Apply the Word**

God graciously and actively loves His people even when we least deserve it. How have you experienced God’s active love? How can you graciously and actively show God’s love to the people He puts in your life?

### Pray with Us

Lord, You have forgiven us for sins seen by none but You. Remind us of Your gracious forgiveness when others’ evil appalls us. Make us Your instruments of forgiveness to those whom the world sees as the least worthy.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 8/7/21

# First Forgive

 **Read:** [**Genesis 33:1–11**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2033.1%E2%80%9311)

### Jacob Meets Esau

33 Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants. 2He put the female servants and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear. 3He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.

4But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept. 5Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. “Who are these with you?” he asked.

Jacob answered, “They are the children God has graciously given your servant.”

6Then the female servants and their children approached and bowed down. 7Next, Leah and her children came and bowed down. Last of all came Joseph and Rachel, and they too bowed down.

8Esau asked, “What’s the meaning of all these flocks and herds I met?”

“To find favor in your eyes, my lord,” he said.

9But Esau said, “I already have plenty, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself.”

10“No, please!” said Jacob. “If I have found favor in your eyes, accept this gift from me. For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favorably. 11Please accept the present that was brought to you, for God has been gracious to me and I have all I need.” And because Jacob insisted, Esau accepted it.

Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him. [Genesis 33:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2033.4)

We called ourselves “sisters in Christ,” but my White friend and I had begun to act like enemies. Over a café breakfast one morning, we argued unkindly over our differing racial views. Then we parted, with me vowing not to see her again. One year later, however, we were hired by the same ministry—working in the same department, unable not to reconnect. Awkwardly at first, we talked over conflicts. Then, over time, God helped us to apologize to each other and to heal and to give the ministry our best.

God also healed the bitter division between Esau and his twin brother, Jacob, and blessed both their lives. A onetime schemer, Jacob had robbed Esau of their father’s blessing. But twenty years later, God called Jacob to return to their homeland. So, Jacob sent ahead bountiful gifts to appease Esau. “But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept” ([Genesis 33:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2033.4)).

Their reunion stands as a classic example of God’s urging to settle anger with a brother or sister before offering our gifts—talents or treasures—to Him ([Matthew 5:23–24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%205.23%E2%80%9324)). Instead, “first go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift” (v. 24). Jacob obeyed God by reconciling with Esau, and later setting up an altar to God ([Genesis 33:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2033.20)). What a beautiful order: First, strive for forgiveness and reconciliation. Then, at His altar, He receives us.

By:  [Patricia Raybon](https://odb.org/author/patriciaraybon/)

#### Reflect & Pray

Against whom do you hold a grudge or grievance? What steps can you take to reconcile?

Dear God, when I hold onto hard feelings against another believer, inspire me on the way to Your altar to first forgive.

#### Insight

Genesis records two times when Jacob met God: first in a dream in Bethel when he was fleeing from Esau (28:10–22) and later as he was preparing to meet Esau (32:22–32). After Jacob wrestled with God, he said, “I saw God face to face” (v. 30). He uses a similar phrase after he met Esau: “To see your face is like seeing the face of God” (33:10), thereby connecting the two events. The NIV Zondervan Study Bible says that “Esau’s actions resemble God’s. Esau treats Jacob in a way that Jacob does not deserve.”

# God Calling – 8/7/21

# All is Well

Our, Lord, bless us and keep us, we beseech Thee.

My Keeping Power is never at fault, but only your realization of it. Not whether I can provide a shelter from the storm, but your failure to be sure of the security of that shelter.

Every fear, every doubt, is a crime against My Love.

Oh! children, trust. Practice daily, many times a day, saying "All is well."

Say it until you believe it, know it.

Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou has wrought for them that trust in thee.  Psalm 31:19

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/8/21

# Prayer in the Father’s Honor



…that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. —[Luke 1:35](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+1%3A35)

If the Son of God has been born into my human flesh, then am I allowing His holy innocence, simplicity, and oneness with the Father the opportunity to exhibit itself in me? What was true of the Virgin Mary in the history of the Son of God’s birth on earth is true of every saint. God’s Son is born into me through the direct act of God; then I as His child must exercise the right of a child— the right of always being face to face with my Father through prayer. Do I find myself continually saying in amazement to the commonsense part of my life, “Why did you want me to turn here or to go over there? ‘Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?’ ” ([Luke 2:49](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2:49)). Whatever our circumstances may be, that holy, innocent, and eternal Child must be in contact with His Father.

Am I simple enough to identify myself with my Lord in this way? Is He having His wonderful way with me? Is God’s will being fulfilled in that His Son has been formed in me (see [Galatians 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+4:19)), or have I carefully pushed Him to one side? Oh, the noisy outcry of today! Why does everyone seem to be crying out so loudly? People today are crying out for the Son of God to be put to death. There is no room here for God’s Son right now— no room for quiet, holy fellowship and oneness with the Father.

Is the Son of God praying in me, bringing honor to the Father, or am I dictating my demands to Him? Is He ministering in me as He did in the time of His manhood here on earth? Is God’s Son in me going through His passion, suffering so that His own purposes might be fulfilled? The more a person knows of the inner life of God’s most mature saints, the more he sees what God’s purpose really is: to “…fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ…” ([Colossians 1:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1:24)). And when we think of what it takes to “fill up,” there is always something yet to be done.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The life of Abraham is an illustration of two things: of unreserved surrender to God, and of God’s complete possession of a child of His for His own highest end.  
Not Knowing Whither

# CCEL – 8/8/21

**The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.**—[PROV. 4:18.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.4.html" \l "Prov.4.18)

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.—Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.—We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.—When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.—For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.—Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

[Phi. 3:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.3.html" \l "Phil.3.12). -[Hos. 6:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Hos.6.html" \l "Hos.6.3).[Matt. 13:43](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.13.html" \l "Matt.13.43). -[II Cor. 3:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.3.html" \l "iiCor.3.18). -[I Cor. 13:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.13.html" \l "iCor.13.10),[12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.13.html" \l "iCor.13.12). -[I John. 3:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.2).

“They weave the spider’s web.” [Isaiah 59:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.59.html" \l "Isa.59.5)

See the spider’s web, and behold in it a most suggestive picture of the hypocrite’s religion. It is meant to catch his prey: the spider fattens himself on flies, and the Pharisee has his reward. Foolish persons are easily entrapped by the loud professions of pretenders, and even the more judicious cannot always escape. Philip baptized Simon Magus, whose guileful declaration of faith was so soon exploded by the stern rebuke of Peter. Custom, reputation, praise, advancement, and other flies, are the small game which hypocrites take in their nets. A spider’s web is a marvel of skill: look at it and admire the cunning hunter’s wiles. Is not a deceiver’s religion equally wonderful? How does he make so barefaced a lie appear to be a truth? How can he make his tinsel answer so well the purpose of gold? A spider’s web comes all from the creature’s own bowels. The bee gathers her wax from flowers, the spider sucks no flowers, and yet she spins out her material to any length. Even so hypocrites find their trust and hope within themselves; their anchor was forged on their own anvil, and their cable twisted by their own hands. They lay their own foundation, and hew out the pillars of their own house, disdaining to be debtors to the sovereign grace of God. But a spider’s web is very frail. It is curiously wrought, but not enduringly manufactured. It is no match for the servant’s broom, or the traveller’s staff. The hypocrite needs no battery of Armstrongs to blow his hope to pieces, a mere puff of wind will do it. Hypocritical cobwebs will soon come down when the besom of destruction begins its purifying work. Which reminds us of one more thought, viz., that such cobwebs are not to be endured in the Lord’s house: he will see to it that they and those who spin them shall be destroyed forever. O my soul, be thou resting on something better than a spider’s web. Be the Lord Jesus thine eternal hiding-place.

# Word Live – 8/8/21

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 8/8/21

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 8/8/21

# The Land Mourns

**Read:** [**Hosea 4:1–3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+4%3a1%e2%80%933)

### The Charge Against Israel

4 Hear the word of the Lord, you Israelites,  
    because the Lord has a charge to bring  
    against you who live in the land:  
“There is no faithfulness, no love,  
    no acknowledgment of God in the land.  
2There is only cursing,[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+4%3A1%E2%80%933+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22136a)] lying and murder,  
    stealing and adultery;  
they break all bounds,  
    and bloodshed follows bloodshed.  
3Because of this the land dries up,  
    and all who live in it waste away;  
the beasts of the field, the birds in the sky  
    and the fish in the sea are swept away.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Hosea 4:2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+4%3A1%E2%80%933+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22136) That is, to pronounce a curse on

Isn’t it fascinating to watch skilled prosecutors argue a case? They clearly articulate the charges brought against the suspect. Then they support those allegations with evidence, logic, and witness testimony. In today’s passage, Hosea called the Israelites into God’s courtroom because God Himself had a charge to bring against them. Hosea played the role of the attorney. The accusation was threefold: They had been unfaithful to God. They did not love Him properly. And they did not even acknowledge Him in the land.

Don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? James 4:4

Their “unfaithfulness” indicates a lack of commitment, an unreliability, and an indecision about the object of their affection. They were easily distracted by other priorities and lured by other gods. The word for “love” in verse 1 is hesed, a compassionate and covenantal devotion. Hesed describes a dedication to ongoing care that is most often seen in God. But here God accuses the Israelites of not showing hesed toward Him. To “acknowledge” God meant to know Him—not just objectively, but relationally. Because of their syncretism with Canaanite beliefs, the Israelites lacked clear teaching on the nature of the one true God. This knowledge of Him was essential for the faithfulness and the love to grow.

What evidence, then, did Hosea offer to support God’s claims? Primarily, he appealed to the acts of the Israelites themselves. Specifically, they had broken God’s law in the Ten Commandments. Not only had they prostituted themselves with other gods, but they had also lied, cursed, cheated, stolen, and committed adultery—without repentance (v. 2). What may have surprised Hosea’s readers is the pervasiveness of the consequences. Their sin resulted not only in personal pain but also national suffering. As God ordained in the covenant: Obedience brings blessing; unfaithfulness does not.

**Apply the Word**

True knowledge of God is essential for us to grow in our love and faithfulness toward Him. How can you deepen your knowledge of Him?

### Pray with Us

God, nurture us in the knowledge of You. Brush away the shabby misconceptions we have of who You are, and give us childlike wonder as Your true nature unfolds to us. To know You is life!

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 8/8/21

# Good Trouble

 **Read:** [**Amos 5:10–24**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Amos%205.10%E2%80%9324)

10There are those who hate the one who upholds justice in court  
    and detest the one who tells the truth.

11You levy a straw tax on the poor  
    and impose a tax on their grain.  
Therefore, though you have built stone mansions,  
    you will not live in them;  
though you have planted lush vineyards,  
    you will not drink their wine.  
12For I know how many are your offenses  
    and how great your sins.

There are those who oppress the innocent and take bribes  
    and deprive the poor of justice in the courts.  
13Therefore the prudent keep quiet in such times,  
    for the times are evil.

14Seek good, not evil,  
    that you may live.  
Then the Lord God Almighty will be with you,  
    just as you say he is.  
15Hate evil, love good;  
    maintain justice in the courts.  
Perhaps the Lord God Almighty will have mercy  
    on the remnant of Joseph.

16Therefore this is what the Lord, the Lord God Almighty, says:

“There will be wailing in all the streets  
    and cries of anguish in every public square.  
The farmers will be summoned to weep  
    and the mourners to wail.  
17There will be wailing in all the vineyards,  
    for I will pass through your midst,”  
says the Lord.

### The Day of the Lord

18Woe to you who long  
    for the day of the Lord!  
Why do you long for the day of the Lord?  
    That day will be darkness, not light.  
19It will be as though a man fled from a lion  
    only to meet a bear,  
as though he entered his house  
    and rested his hand on the wall  
    only to have a snake bite him.  
20Will not the day of the Lord be darkness, not light—  
    pitch-dark, without a ray of brightness?

21“I hate, I despise your religious festivals;  
    your assemblies are a stench to me.  
22Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings,  
    I will not accept them.  
Though you bring choice fellowship offerings,  
    I will have no regard for them.  
23Away with the noise of your songs!  
    I will not listen to the music of your harps.  
24But let justice roll on like a river,  
    righteousness like a never-failing stream!

Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream! [Amos 5:24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Amos%205.24)

When John Lewis, an American congressman and civil rights leader, died in 2020, people from many political persuasions mourned. In 1965, Lewis marched with Martin Luther King Jr. to secure voting rights for Black citizens. During the march, Lewis suffered a cracked skull, causing scars he carried the rest of his life. “When you see something that is not right, not just, not fair,” Lewis said, “you have a moral obligation to say something. To do something.” He also said, “Never, ever, be afraid to make some noise and get in good, necessary trouble.”

Lewis learned early that doing what was right, to be faithful to the truth, required making “good” trouble. He would need to speak things that were unpopular. The prophet Amos knew this too. Seeing Israel’s sin and injustice, he couldn’t keep quiet. Amos denounced how the powerful were oppressing “the innocent and tak[ing] bribes and depriv[ing] the poor of justice in the courts,” while building “stone mansions” with “lush vineyards” ([Amos 5:11–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Amos%205.11%E2%80%9312)). Rather than maintaining his own safety and comfort by staying out of the fray, Amos named the evil. The prophet made good, necessary trouble.

But this trouble aimed at something good—justice for all. “Let justice roll on like a river!” Amos exclaimed (v. 24). When we get into good trouble (the kind of righteous, nonviolent trouble justice requires), the goal is always goodness and healing.

By:  [Winn Collier](https://odb.org/author/wcollier/)

#### Reflect & Pray

Where do you sense the Holy Spirit might be prompting you to make some good trouble? How can you discern the godly way to do just that?

Heavenly Father, if I’m left to myself, I’ll likely play it safe, stay comfortable, keep quiet. But I know that You might ask something different. Help me discern what to do to honor You.

#### Insight

While Jeremiah prophesied the fall of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, Amos was called to declare the judgment of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. We know little of his life aside from glimpses of information embedded in his book of prophecy, but we do know that he was from the village of Tekoa ([Amos 1:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Amos%201.1)), a few miles south of Jerusalem. This means that Amos was a prophet from the Southern Kingdom who was sent to minister to the Northern Kingdom. His prophecy contains lament about and response to the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians.

By: [**Bill Crowder**](https://odb.org/author/billcrowder/)

# God Calling – 8/8/21

# Empty Yourself

Rely on Me alone. Ask no other help. Pay all out in the Spirit of trust that more will come to meet your supply.

Empty your vessels quickly to ensure a Divine Supply.

So much retained by you, so much the less will be gained from Me. It is a Law of Divine Supply.

To hold back, to retain, implies a fear of the future, a want of trust in Me.

When you ask Me to save you from the sea of poverty and difficulty you must trust wholly to Me.  If you do not, and your prayer and faith are genuine, then I must first answer your prayer for help as a rescuer does that of a drowning man who is struggling to save himself.

He renders him still more helpless and powerless until he is wholly at the will and mercy of the rescuer.  So understand My leading.  Trust wholly. Trust completely.

Empty your vessel.  I will fill it.  You ask both of you to understand Divine Supply. It is a most difficult lesson for My children to learn.  So dependent have they become on material supply they fail to understand.  You must live as I tell you.

Depend on Me.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.  Psalm 4:8

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/9/21

# Prayer in the Father’s Hearing



Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me." —[John 11:41](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+11%3A41)

When the Son of God prays, He is mindful and consciously aware of only His Father. God always hears the prayers of His Son, and if the Son of God has been formed in me (see [Galatians 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+4:19)) the Father will always hear my prayers. But I must see to it that the Son of God is exhibited in my human flesh. “…your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit…” ([1 Corinthians 6:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6:19)), that is, your body is the Bethlehem of God’s Son. Is the Son of God being given His opportunity to work in me? Is the direct simplicity of His life being worked out in me exactly as it was worked out in His life while here on earth? When I come into contact with the everyday occurrences of life as an ordinary human being, is the prayer of God’s eternal Son to His Father being prayed in me? Jesus says, “In that day you will ask in My name…” ([John 16:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+16:26)). What day does He mean? He is referring to the day when the Holy Spirit has come to me and made me one with my Lord.

Is the Lord Jesus Christ being abundantly satisfied by your life, or are you exhibiting a walk of spiritual pride before Him? Never let your common sense become so prominent and forceful that it pushes the Son of God to one side. Common sense is a gift that God gave to our human nature— but common sense is not the gift of His Son. Supernatural sense is the gift of His Son, and we should never put our common sense on the throne. The Son always recognizes and identifies with the Father, but common sense has never yet done so and never will. Our ordinary abilities will never worship God unless they are transformed by the indwelling Son of God. We must make sure that our human flesh is kept in perfect submission to Him, allowing Him to work through it moment by moment. Are we living at such a level of human dependence upon Jesus Christ that His life is being exhibited moment by moment in us?

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

To those who have had no agony Jesus says, “I have nothing for you; stand on your own feet, square your own shoulders. I have come for the man who knows he has a bigger handful than he can cope with, who knows there are forces he cannot touch; I will do everything for him if he will let Me. Only let a man grant he needs it, and I will do it for him.” The Shadow of an Agony, 1166 R

# CCEL – 8/9/21

**Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.**—[SONG 4:7.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.4.html" \l "Song.4.7)

The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.—We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.—I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing.

Ye are washed, . . . ye are sanctified, . . . ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.—The King's daughter is all glorious within.—Perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD.

Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.

These are they which . . . have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.—A glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but . . . holy and without blemish.—Ye are complete in him.

[Isa. 1:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.1.html" \l "Isa.1.5). -[Isa. 64:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.64.html" \l "Isa.64.6). -[Rom. 7:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.7.html" \l "Rom.7.18).[I Cor. 6:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.6.html" \l "iCor.6.11). -[Psa. 45:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.45.html" \l "Ps.45.13). -[Ezek. 16:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.16.html" \l "Ezek.16.14).[Psa. 90:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.90.html" \l "Ps.90.17).[Rev. 7:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.7.html" \l "Rev.7.14). -[Eph. 5:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.5.html" \l "Eph.5.27). -[Col. 2:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.2.html" \l "Col.2.10).

“The city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it.” [Revelation 21:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.21.html" \l "Rev.21.23)

Yonder in the better world, the inhabitants are independent of all creature comforts. They have no need of raiment; their white robes never wear out, neither shall they ever be defiled. They need no medicine to heal diseases, “for the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.” They need no sleep to recruit their frames—they rest not day nor night, but unweariedly praise him in his temple. They need no social relationship to minister comfort, and whatever happiness they may derive from association with their fellows is not essential to their bliss, for their Lord’s society is enough for their largest desires. They need no teachers there; they doubtless commune with one another concerning the things of God, but they do not require this by way of instruction; they shall all be taught of the Lord. Ours are the alms at the king’s gate, but they feast at the table itself. Here we lean upon the friendly arm, but there they lean upon their Beloved and upon him alone. Here we must have the help of our companions, but there they find all they want in Christ Jesus. Here we look to the meat which perisheth, and to the raiment which decays before the moth, but there they find everything in God. We use the bucket to fetch us water from the well, but there they drink from the fountain head, and put their lips down to the living water. Here the angels bring us blessings, but we shall want no messengers from heaven then. They shall need no Gabriels there to bring their love-notes from God, for there they shall see him face to face. Oh! what a blessed time shall that be when we shall have mounted above every second cause and shall rest upon the bare arm of God! What a glorious hour when God, and not his creatures; the Lord, and not his works, shall be our daily joy! Our souls shall then have attained the perfection of bliss.

# Word Live – 8/9/21

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 8/9/21

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 8/9/21

# Worthless Worship

**Read:** [**Hosea 4:4–14**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+4%3a4%e2%80%9314)

4“But let no one bring a charge,  
    let no one accuse another,  
for your people are like those  
    who bring charges against a priest.  
5You stumble day and night,  
    and the prophets stumble with you.  
So I will destroy your mother—  
6    my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.

“Because you have rejected knowledge,  
    I also reject you as my priests;  
because you have ignored the law of your God,  
    I also will ignore your children.  
7The more priests there were,  
    the more they sinned against me;  
    they exchanged their glorious God[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+4%3A4%E2%80%9314+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22141a)] for something disgraceful.  
8They feed on the sins of my people  
    and relish their wickedness.  
9And it will be: Like people, like priests.  
    I will punish both of them for their ways  
    and repay them for their deeds.

10“They will eat but not have enough;  
    they will engage in prostitution but not flourish,  
because they have deserted the Lord  
    to give themselves 11to prostitution;  
old wine and new wine  
    take away their understanding.  
12My people consult a wooden idol,  
    and a diviner’s rod speaks to them.  
A spirit of prostitution leads them astray;  
    they are unfaithful to their God.  
13They sacrifice on the mountaintops  
    and burn offerings on the hills,  
under oak, poplar and terebinth,  
    where the shade is pleasant.  
Therefore your daughters turn to prostitution  
    and your daughters-in-law to adultery.

14“I will not punish your daughters  
    when they turn to prostitution,  
nor your daughters-in-law  
    when they commit adultery,  
because the men themselves consort with harlots  
    and sacrifice with shrine prostitutes—  
    a people without understanding will come to ruin!

#### Footnotes:

1. [Hosea 4:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+4%3A4%E2%80%9314+&version=NIV#en-NIV-22141) Syriac (see also an ancient Hebrew scribal tradition); Masoretic Text me; / I will exchange their glory

Being a spiritual leader of any kind is an immense responsibility that we dare not take lightly. The book of James warns us that people holding such positions incur a stricter judgment (James 3:1). Jesus told His disciples that causing a young, impressionable convert to stumble was an offense worthy of the greatest punishment possible (Matt. 18:6).

God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth. John 4:24

In today’s passage, Hosea delivers a similar pronouncement as God turns his accusatory gaze from the people to the priests. The priests had not taught the people well. The Israelites were “destroyed from lack of knowledge” (v. 6). It’s no wonder that they had divided their affection between God and Baal. The knowledge they were missing was both factual and relational. The priests had neither imparted an understanding about God nor led the people into communion with Him.

However, not only were these priests negligent in their teaching, they were also predatory in their practice. They encouraged the people’s sin, rather than rebuking it. They entered into the wickedness—enjoyed it even (v. 8). And as a result, both people and priests would be punished (v. 9).

The second part of this passage (vv. 10–14) demonstrates that right knowledge is imperative to right worship. Lacking a clear understanding of the one true God, His people pursued prostitution and idolatry and all sorts of perversions. “A people without understanding will come to ruin!” (v. 14). It isn’t difficult to connect the warnings of Hosea 4 to our own lives. Whether we are in official leadership position or not, we bear responsibility to train the next generation in the Word of the Lord. If the Church is not collectively leading our children into an intimate knowledge of God—both factual and relational—it’s no wonder their affections are divided.

**Apply the Word**

Pray today for the spiritual leaders in your life. Encourage them in their teaching of the Word. And consider how you can better lead the next generation.

### Pray with Us

We pray that You will sustain our spiritual leaders in the heavy responsibility You have given them. Help them be diligent as they study Scripture and expound biblical truth to those under their authority.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 8/9/21

# Fearless Love

 **Read:** [**1 John 3:1**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%203.1)

3 See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

**Read:** [**1 John 3:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%203.1)[**11–18**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%203.11%E2%80%9318)

### More on Love and Hatred

11For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. 12Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother’s were righteous. 13Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters,[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+3%3A1+%2C+11%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30593a)] if the world hates you. 14We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. 15Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

16This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. 17If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 18Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

#### Footnotes:

1. [1 John 3:13](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+3%3A1+%2C+11%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#en-NIV-30593) The Greek word for brothers and sisters (adelphoi) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God’s family; also in verse 16.

We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. [1 John 3:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%203.14)

There are some images so powerful they can never be forgotten. That was my experience when I viewed a famous photograph of the late Princess Diana of Wales. At first glance, the captured scene looks mundane: smiling warmly, the princess is shaking the hand of an unidentified man. But it’s the photograph’s story that makes it remarkable.

On April 19, 1987, when Princess Diana visited London Middlesex Hospital, the United Kingdom was engulfed in a wave of panic as it confronted the AIDS epidemic. Not knowing how the disease—which often killed with terrifying speed—was spread, the public at times treated AIDS victims like social pariahs.

So it was a stunning moment when Diana, with ungloved hands and a genuine smile, calmly shook an AIDS patient’s hand that day. That image of respect and kindness would move the world to treat victims of the disease with similar mercy and compassion.

The picture reminds me of something I often forget: freely and generously offering the love of Jesus to others is worth it. John reminded early believers in Christ that to let love wither or hide in the face of our fear is really to live “in death” ([1 John 3:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%203.14)). And to love freely and unafraid, filled and empowered with the Spirit’s self-giving love, is to experience resurrection life in all its fullness (vv. 14, 16).

By:  [Monica La Rose](https://odb.org/author/monicalarose/)

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#### Reflect & Pray

When are you most prone to let fear stifle your love for others? How can you grow in experiencing and sharing the Spirit’s boundless love within those fearful places?

God of love, You are love, and to live in love is to live in You. I long to live with that kind of fearless, joyous love. Fill me with Your Spirit, and carry me ever deeper into Your love, until fear dissolves and Your love flows freely through me.

#### Insight

John’s words in this epistle express the awareness of an aging family member who wanted dear brothers, sisters, children, and grandchildren to share his fullness of joy and love of Christ ([1 John 1:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%201.4); [2:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%202.5)). As a younger man, he’d seen with his own eyes the “Word of life” (1:1–3). For three years he’d walked, watched, and talked with the Teacher who urged His disciples to live in Him—as a branch in a vineyard draws life and bears the fruit of its vine (2:6; [John 15:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.5)). So now, while acknowledging that no one can claim the perfection that John had seen in Christ ([1 John 1:8–10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%201.8%E2%80%9310)), he longed for family members to live life to its fullest rather than wandering back into the confusion of living a life of death and darkness without love.

By: [**Mart DeHaan**](https://odb.org/author/martdehaan-2/)

# God Calling – 8/9/21

# Effort And Rest

Come to Me, talk to Me, dwell with Me and then you will know My Way is a sure way, My Paths are safe paths.

Come very near to Me.

Dig deep down into the soil of the Kingdom. Effort and rest -- a union of the two.

Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.  Psalm 75:1